

“What matters is to never lose the spirit of struggle, not ever, it does not matter how terrible things look, but while your mind and your heart do not betray you the rest becomes mere detail, our bodies can weaken, it is true, but what makes us great has nothing to do with flesh and bones, what turns us into giants are our convictions, our spirit of knowing that we do what is correct.”

This text was written one year after the attempted bombing of a bank in Chile that almost cost Tortuga his life. Tortuga is now serving a sentence of six years on house arrest.

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# THE ABYSS DOES NOT STOP US

by  
Luciano “Tortuga”  
Pitronello



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Communique at one year of the bombing that almost cost me my life

First days of June, 2012

by  
Luciano “Tortuga” Pitronello

translated by War On Society  
[waronsociety.noblogs.org](http://waronsociety.noblogs.org)

originally published by Plain Words in the book  
To The Indomitable Hearts;  
The Prison Letters of Luciano “Tortuga” Pitronello

this edition published by Pen & Pistol Press  
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[penandpistolpress.tumblr.com](http://penandpistolpress.tumblr.com)

# *To the conscious rebels; to my companions scattered across the world:*

A little more than a month has passed since everything changed for me that cold predawn of June 1st last year, and I believe that to not declare myself about it would be to play along with the game that has me here prisoner in the hospital of the Santiago 1 prison, and it would be a dishonor to myself, but above all to you my dear compañerxs who worry about me.

I should say: I wanted to make a balance one year from when all this happened, but did not manifest it publicly for two reasons: the first is because that text was too compromising, and the second and more important in my opinion is because nothing was really analyzed in it, it was only a compilation of frustration, resentment and hatred that raged against everyone, cursing those who ran off, but now I want to do it, I feel the lucidity to be able to deliver some words that I am sure are so deserved.

But before beginning, I want to advise you of the reasons for my delay. The days have not been easy, the permanent confinement has begun to do its work, and my mood has been terrible, which is why my first draft of this communique ended up being a compendium of rage and ire; arrogance, aggressiveness and haughtiness began to flourish in my attitudes, and faced with some situations I simply did not recognize myself, but I fight, I fight to continue forward and not betray myself, trying to fight my own self in daily life, reminding myself and not forgetting who I am and why I am here.

Well here I go...

As concerns my wounds and healing it has gone very well, the daily exercises and practice in the manual labor of life have been done, I say this with a great smile, that I have surpassed the disability of knowing myself semi-mutilated; as for my vision it has improved greatly, but I should continue with the ocular treatment for a good time; as for the burns, apart from being all healed many have evolved positively, even so, I should keep using the special compression suit for the burns and the rose hip oil. At least for me, this chapter that has to do with my physical state is closed, happily the bomb did not kill me.

My emotional state has been weakening over the past days, but this is due to the permanent confinement, I know that all prisoners have our highs and lows, so I am optimistic about this situation, after all, the confinement cannot be forever, and if it was then they would only have my flesh, because my mind and spirit will carry on in the street next to each combatant, smiling and conspiring, and I say this not as a poetic slogan I affirm it as a reality that is reflected in the projection of insurgent dreaming where the authoritarian values of domination are crushed in various ways.

Prison is hard, I will not deny it, but it is possible to confront it, and we are witnesses of that, myself and each and every one of my companions who have in different ways embraced me to make me know that I am not alone. The exemplary punishment that power boasts so much about is nothing of the sort, at least in my case, since my comrades as well as myself do not have a clue why their media-spectacle is realized successfully, and what's more, the only example we follow here is the one we give ourselves, wielding our best weapon: solidarity.

Self-critiques I make many, above all in this episode that is called prison, where I have taken out the worst of myself, for which I humbly beg the pardon of each and every one of the comrades who I have shown my teeth to in one way or another, those I have attacked only for the desire to unload my anger, those I did not want to see/write due to the rage and envy that my condition created in me, and above all, I beg the pardon of everyone who has had to swallow bad faces, disagreeable times and my poor character for the sole fact of wanting to be in solidarity with me. So as I ought to confess I have not been at the height of the circumstances, of your solidarity which is enormous, but here we are ready to move forward, to fall and to get back up again, to learn from the errors — this is the idea, right?

If I am to make a constructive criticism it would be only that perhaps there is a lack of first-hand information about what it is to live the consequences of choosing a rebel life, what it means to live in prison and isolation, what this brings with it, understanding more closely the stigma of being considered a terrorist and what goes on with our lives when this happens, familiarizing ourselves more with subjects like clandestinity and exile that are recurrent places in the struggle for freedom in a way that is more real and less imaginary, and finally starting to speak more about torture, the methods the enemy applies, crime as base value for a State-police, mutilation as a possibility in the war against authority, pain and agony as part of the life of warriors, and thus each and every one of these difficult possibilities that one can face, beyond

speculation and charlatanry.

If I am to share my scant, but no less intense, experience in this sense, I would say that the work of prison and isolation have to do more than anything with a moral demotivation, the others start not to matter a bit, likewise what is happening outside, you adhere yourself to the prison reality, this is your world now, what do you get from knowing about what is happening outside if you are inside? You start to worry always less about yourself, you do not care about anything, you become contemptuous of others and the environment, you begin to value others' efforts to get a smile out of you less and less, because they are not living your nightmare, it follows that you lose the fear of anything because you know that you have lost everything and you are at the bottom of the abyss, you have fucked life, you turn hostile and aggressive, seeking in this way to end everything soon, that the jailers crush you with their batons for the insults you hurl at them every day, and that, if you are lucky, they'll give you a hand and you'll end up dead, to finally rest from the psychosis you are carrying or, in the worst case, that other prisoners do this task to show you who has the most balls. When the psychosis of confinement advances, gestures of solidarity begin to matter little, you put to yourself emotional traps like "Why see importance in a gesture of solidarity if I remain prisoner?" or even worse, you articulate phrases like, "They are not suffering the consequences like I am," and you curse your luck; but some hard loving and caring slaps are needed to warn us of the toxicity of these thoughts, that is to say, it is really stupid to believe that only we live the consequences of confinement, and it is not that one wants for everyone to live these consequences, but the sense of not being alone and helpless makes us strong, therefore, when a comrade falls prisoner it doesn't just have to do with their confinement/punishment, there are many noble hearts who decide to accompany the comrade in this new situation, acting in solidarity with him/her, being present, writing, spreading news of their situation, vindicating them in the street, with flyers, pamphlets, posters, shouting their name in the demonstration, breaking the symbols of power in their honor, etc. Prison and isolation do their work, you start to dig your own grave and alone you go deeper into it, until you end up hearing phrases so absurd as that you are alone, and the worst of this self-imposed trap is that we ourselves take care of driving off the tools that can help us to not decline, and then, sickly, we complain and get depressed from the forgetfulness we have buried ourselves in, because by now no one remembers us, no one is in solidarity with us, the desperation eats us up inside, and what we think would be our greatest weapon to confront adversity was crushed by the walls of silence, our will shattered, and so your projects become of little relevance, you get

Because when you shouted "strength compañero" I felt stronger than ever! Because neither prison nor agony nor death will detain us! Long live the International Revolutionary Front! Long live the Informal Anarchist Federation! Death to the State! The struggle continues! Toward victory, always!

Luciano Pitronello

Sch. Insurrectionalist Political Prisoner.

continue, I will get up, I will show my claws again and I will keep fighting, confronting the enemy constantly, as in my best times, because I am not a warrior who must be remembered with longing, I am another companion, another one of the pack, only in the bowels of the prison beast, all that differentiates me from the companions in the street is the situation that we face, but if you are able to risk your freedom and even life in the struggle that bonds us, why should it be different for me? One year after the failed attack on the Santander bank branch, I have raised myself with ferocity, I won, even though I sit on the bench of the accused, because I knew to take the reigns of my life with my own hands, I triumphed in the face of the life of commerce that they want to impose on us and in the face of death as the only exit, but this victory is not only mine, what arrogance it would be on my part to believe so, because if it were not for the bold comrades who dared to send me their encouragement and care, know this for certain that today I would not be writing these lines, and so, we, the combatants of the new urban guerrilla, are their defeat.

To all those beautiful people who understand that the social war is much more than bombs, bullets and benzine, and who know that solidarity is much more than a hobby to invest your free time in, to all those who cannot pacify their dreaming while they know that one of their own is suffering, to those who if they did not have the free time kept looking for it, skipping work or class because they know that it depended on them to raise a comrade's morale, to all those who took on the fun and exciting adventure of conquering freedom, to the comrades of the FAI/FRI, to my dear friend Reyhard Rumbayan (Eat), who with his noble gestures has brought me strength when I was weak, to all those absolved of the bombs case frame-up, whose freedom meant a smile for me when it seemed it would be a torment, to the comrades of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire, who with their dignity motivate me to continue fighting, to Gabriel Pombo da Silva, Marco Camenisch, and to all the comrades investigated and arrested in the repressive raid against the anarchist movement in Italy, to Mauri who taught me that a wolf clenches his jaw even after death, to the autonomous collectives who attack with decisiveness, to the companions who are clandestine, exiled or hostage, to the brave solidarians, to the conscious rebels, to all of you I dedicate these lines, I send you a warm embrace and I owe you the determination of keeping me alive, because you have to know, you were oxygen when there was none.

discouraged easily, the future becomes uncertain, you start to lose interest in life, and one anguishing night you end up hanging yourself in your cell.

So in order to not fall into these kinds of dynamics it is important to observe oneself constantly and to be evaluating ourselves, clinging to the things/people/circumstances that make us well, and distancing ourselves from the harmful (as much as possible), because certainly to reach a state of carceral psychosis is not a matter of one day or another, it is a monster that goes on growing in of our minds and hearts with the passing of times, and it is effectively a gradual process that we can become aware of and combat before it is too late.

I should say that nobody ever told me what permanent confinement meant (much less how to confront it), my most real encounters were the anecdotes of one book or another, and the rest was experienced through my imagination, with this, I am never saying that today I was not ready to assume the costs of the postures I had chosen in life, but it definitely would have been a great help to me. Fine, but at least in my case I have tried to face this arming myself with projects to contribute to, even from my condition, it is important to find sense in your days, they can be simple things, reading a book and giving your opinion, writing with others who are imprisoned or not, creating music/poetry, learning to draw, exercising your body, etc; but here I make a note, our most important projects, at least in permanent confinement, should be those that are needed only from our readiness and will, and therefore, I do not foreclose on the possibility of contributing in projects that are beyond our physical limitations, but one must keep in consideration that these can bring oceans of frustrations with them: someone doesn't come to visit, does not write me back, forgets to bring this or that, that we organize ourselves around certain themes, and if our senses of life are limited in turn to just projects in the street, with a few trip-ups of this kind we will be taken down in terms of morale more or less quickly; therefore I believe that one must maintain two kinds of projects, one that makes us maintain contact with the other side of the wall, and the other that must do more than anything with an individual labor, that can generate itself even in conditions of maximum confinement, something that happens in unfortunate cases, be it loss of communication with the outside, or the seizure only of the material we use for our individual projects, so we do not decline in morale. It is important to create support networks for oneself in order to not crumble along the way, to be observant and analyze what the prison reality offers you and to take from it what you deem convenient, which is to say that if the prison keeps you in total isolation you can take advantage of the silence of this situation to



read, write or reflect, alternatively if it offers you the courtyard you can take advantage of it to exercise or talk with other prisoners (one can always learn something useful), and thus in a substantial way the possibility of elaborating an escape plan or a mutiny always exists independently of the regimen they submit us to.

If I am to speak about another one of the possible consequences of this war that some fill their mouths with so much, it would be to say that to be recognized as an enemy of authority is not easy, less so when you are labeled as a terrorist in the media, your social environment is affected almost unanimously, family members, friends and comrades take off running, turn their backs on you and often deny they ever knew you, few are the brave who dare to remain with you, the public opinion does its work and through all the possible methods the system tries to isolate you, they don't have to get their hands dirty with the death penalty anymore, these days the methods are more sophisticated and democratic, they make your life cease to have meaning because they distance you from everything that you are a part of, and they don't just do this physically by getting you in a cage, but also psychologically to reduce your convictions, they demonize you collectively, they erase the memory of what you once were and they transform you into a television case, in a failed explosive attack, in a bank robbery with a policeman killed, or into a member of a phantasmic terrorist organization, you are that, you are your letter of presentation, to such an extent that if you don't become aware that you are much more than what the press says, you end up believing it; and the best example can be given by Mauri—why is he known for an unsuccessful May 22 and has anyone ever heard of the times when he helped some elderly people in his neighborhood with their heavy shopping bags? We ourselves are responsible for reducing him to a date on the calendar. Society strikes you psychically, your days no longer have the sense they did before, you are worth nothing and you have ruining the lives of everyone around you — Why keep existing? Why cause more pain? They no longer need to stain their hands with your blood; please, we are civilized people, instead they incite you to finish yourself off, because they have reduced you to a mere episode, you are that, a terrorist who only knows how to create pain around him, and so the best thing you can do is to do your loved ones a favor, that is if you still have anything of a heart left, and end your life. This is the hidden discourse that reproduces our shiny Chilean democracy, there are no longer any revolutionaries, now they minimize us as mere terrorists, because clearly a revolutionary is someone with feelings, with ideas, love of freedom and a companion of the oppressed, that is, someone worth imitating, instead the terrorist is a shadow with impunity who has no heart and is obsessed with

of arming an International Revolutionary Front, it remains clear that it does not matter whether we find ourselves prisoners, exiles in another region, or clandestine on another continent, the struggle is only one and it surpasses the barriers of nations and borders, because independently of the language we speak or the idiosyncrasies that differentiate us, the struggle continues to be against structures of power, against the values of authority and against the logic of exploitation and domination, bonding us in this way with each and every one of the warriors who fight for the same objective as ourselves: freedom. I recognize myself in the internationalist struggle, since I know first-hand its excellent results, which is why I take advantage of this instance to unite myself to the proposal of the comrades in Greece, embracing the initiative of the FAI/FRI as a project that appeals to the same criteria as I, hoping that this communicate can be a true and real contribution, above all for the comrades who live in situations similar to mine and/or to those who in an unwanted future will have to pass through this.

If I am to make a balance of all this, one year after the bombing that almost cost me my life, my result is positive, very positive, and I will not deny that things were difficult, because there were days dark as the depths of the sea, when everything was crumbling around me, my life as I had constructed it went to shit, but this helped me, with the pain caused, to learn that all this I had built I had not made sufficiently solidly as to endure the praxis of my discourse, if family, friends, comrades and lovers took off flying away from my side, to speak much more profoundly than just physically, to see myself in this situation where many thought that it would be better for me to just sink alone before I would take more people down with me, since they believe that I would never get back up from this, if all these people underestimated me because in their smallness they thought that they themselves wouldn't be able to stand such a fall as mine, today they are not at my side, it is only for their mediocrity, because know this: I do not lack the affection to forgive them, after everything, not one of us was prepared for this. But for all the rudeness of my words and life, there was no lack of gestures of love and absolute dedication, making me know that in spite of everything they were with me, in the good and in the bad, until the end, reaffirming bonds already forged, perhaps only with incredulous gazes of companionship, with one or another conversation walking around the block, sharing a snack or fraternally criticizing each other on the bench of a plaza.

Power wanted me out of the fight, they wanted to suspend me eternally in June 1st 2011, and they even try to do it today, it is something to observe why I am known and where I find myself, but for me none of this is over, I will

What matters is to never lose the spirit of struggle, not ever, it does not matter how terrible things look, but while your mind and your heart do not betray you the rest becomes mere detail, our bodies can weaken, it is true, but what makes us great has nothing to do with flesh and bones, what turns us into giants are our convictions, our spirit of knowing that we do what is correct.

Now, I write these lines not only to warn of the awful consequences that revolutionary struggle can bring with it, I also do it to contribute in the creation of new and not so new methods for confronting the difficult journeys that we can carry our decisions along. And And it is that on this occasion I can contribute with some examples, through which I encourage other comrades to share their experiences, since the possibilities of struggle are infinite, madness, rape, exile, mutilation, victory, torture, clandestinity, laughter, imprisonment, pain, betrayal, amnesia, dependency, beatings, humiliation, death, all of these, none, others, and so many more, and how many of the warriors in the street today who fight against power and its designs know this? That is, how prepared are we to assume the costs of the social war if we do not know these kinds of things? Can we speak of not repenting without having all this in consideration? Do we understand the significance of prison? What it brings with it? Or do we comprehend what it carries when a comrade is mad? How far do we understand the consequences of declaring ourselves enemies of the State/Capital?

In a struggle against the system in its totality, we have everything to lose, and do we accept these conditions before we embark on the search for our dreams? I am of the idea of knowing what one is involved in, so as to also know to abide by the consequences, assuming them and coming out gracefully through them, because otherwise what happens is what a dear and close compañera warned of: we turn ourselves into the worst propaganda of struggle.

If we think carefully, it should not surprise us that many comrades of before have chosen self-exile as a response to some of these consequences, and it really very difficult to continue the fight in an area where through the media and socially the system cries for your annihilation, in the end how can one confront the system when it is obsessed with confronting you, having you individualized, located and pointed out? Now, I believe that if it is indeed true that the exile of before served to hide behind the comfort of a normal life, far from the criminalization of revolutionary ideas, today, and with the validity of the proposal of the comrades of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire,

the use of violence due to past childhood traumas — so how to face this situation?

For my part I have learned to keep public opinion at bay, which is usually the opinion of the bourgeois press, with the simple act of analyzing their role one manages to halt much of their discourse, although I will not deny that many times in their work they have hurt me deeply, above all when you become aware of these opinions coming from the mouths of people you love, when they are the ones who put you between the spade and the wall: either kill yourself or keep hurting us, wow, how difficult, how intense, then it is your turn to decide, you or they, you or those you love most, and if you choose yourself what sense will life have without them? Will you choose yourself? Do you love them so little? You? Them? The instinct of survival or your love? Which is stronger? Apparently neither is the correct alternative, but I choose my life, if I do not love myself, it is impossible for me to love others. And I end up expelling various persons from my life and from my heart for always, I keep going, alone and wounded like that predawn, confused, with death stalking me and red in flames of ire, life hit me again, but it is only another chapter and I get up again, this time with the help of what was never missing: solidarity. Now I reflect on it, one year after the bombing that almost cost me my life, and I do not repent these decisions, the pain was better, like the bomb, it was momentary, but life continued and the suffering of these episodes went diffused with the passing of time, life continues, struggle continues, and what is insurmountable today will tomorrow be nothing more than a story, another chapter in this existence of combat.

At this point I have spoken of two possible consequences in revolutionary struggle, prison and being recognized as an enemy of society, but I have not spoken of the consequence that is most noted in my case, the mutilation of our bodies and how we can keep fighting in spite of this. If I am to speak of healing and how the mutilation of our bodies becomes like a cross that one must carry for life, I believe that it is important to point out that each case is particular, having its windows and own difficulties. But I suppose that in the final count there are enough similarities. At first you are discouraged, it is like a cataclysm that dusted your life away and all beautiful feelings find themselves under the rubble of mutilation, desires that what happened to you had only been a bad dream that you will soon wake up from, you become obstinate toward the obvious, this could not have happened to you, there must be an explanation, but the only explanation is the one the mirror gives you, the days pass, you get depressed, you think that you will never get past it, you need to ask for help for some basic tasks and this causes you



an uncomfortable humiliation, you become hateful and this new situation frustrates you, the people who try to encourage you notice your resignation, life like this does not make sense, but they apply themselves to support you in spite of your mood, you are irritated, you don't want to do exercises or rehabilitate yourself, you want to send everything to the shit, take your life away, this seems to be an option, but you are afraid that in the attempt you will end up worse off, you are confused, you cry in the nights of solitude and you make yourself like a wild beast in front of others, you are wounded you know, but you have to heal your heart to be able to start to recover. If you manage to make it this far, you have taken a step forward in the path toward victory, your victory, because this is a battle, now you should arm yourself with patience, frustration is just around the corner, one, two, three, one hundred falls, nobody said it would be easy, but look at yourself, you don't do it very well, but you do it, and alone, without help, a pat on the back, the rest is practice they tell you, if you could do it once, you can do it again, you look around you, physically you are alone, and you accomplish it: you smile. How long has it been since you smiled? You don't need to show it to anyone, you have shown it to yourself, you are a warrior giving one of your best fights, you resign yourself not to die, this is for the brave, a few more stumbles, ridicule from the usual suspects, reality takes care of putting you on the uphill, you lay it on yourself, it is difficult, but you already did not renounce yourself, that is a fact, you look back, you've come a long way to collapse here, now you have reasons to continue, you cannot fail all of them, the who you love and who want to see you happy, but above all, you cannot fail yourself, you told yourself this once when things were difficult, you are a warrior for life, and you clench your teeth against the shame, sometimes you say horrible things, you are implacable in front of yourself, other times you feel the proudest in the world, you did not fall in spite of everything, the days move forward, you start to take in the ritual of all this, you no longer turn sour before your reflection, you begin to accept it, you learn things that are new for this context, but not so new for life itself, you relearn to learn, things now are seen in a different nuance and one afternoon with the sun still as company you set the ultimatum, if I do not remake my life by this date then I will not go on with this madness...

Finally you persist, you manage to get past it, that date arrives when you have to make the evaluation of your performance and the smile on your face reveals that you have passed the test with success and excellence, then you do not feel disabled nor incapacitated, nor anything, you are another warrior, ready to face anything.

As for what concerns my case in particular, I suppose that what happened to me was what happens in the majority of serious accidents, I wanted to seek a rapid and simple solution (death), but some provoked me, some very rudely, at least they tried to, and so, clinging to solidarity I kept on until the recovery began to give its first results, now with this background I got it into my head that I could get myself up out of this fall, I remember that the stubbornness and obstinacy played much in my favor, since there were people who did not give a shit about my recovery (including medical specialists), but in the end I would make the best judgment myself, it would only a question of time, I also remember that I went through many embarrassments that I would prefer not to disclose hahaha, and these happened because I went against time in my recovery, I tried to do/practice everything, even without having rehearsed things, and I say that I went against time because I wanted to go into the prison as recovered as possible, I did not want to even think of a prison guard assisting me, I luckily that never happened. After going into the prison on November 22 with a tight stomach and high morale, I prepared to take advantage of this new situation of total confinement to finish with rehabilitating completely, and there was no lack of times when they ridiculed me for my physical condition, but in the face of these situations I bit my tongue and thought that sooner or later they would regret their jokes, because I knew better than anyone that they were spitting at the sky, soon I would be totally recovered and they would not dare to speak to me that way; the time passed, I took my time, I went as slow as a turtle, I exercised every day without a break, whether it was cold or hot, I was disciplined with myself, and it was a question of practice, patience and perseverance (the 3 "P"s like I told you) to find myself totally recovered, and well, here I am, look at me one year after the bombing that almost killed me. Who said that I would bite the mud of humiliation forever? Who said that I would be defeated for the rest of my life? Who said that the struggle does not make us great? If my ideas can bring me to lose my life, they can also bring me to recover it, that was always my gamble, and so I have thrown myself with all my strength into the fight, because I recognize in it the greatness to break the chains, and it is a matter of observing me in the everyday to confirm this assertion, if with telling you that I can even thread a needle, like this, as I am, with 8 of the 10 fingers of my hands, I can tie my shoelaces, cook, wash, make nice origami cubes and if it pleases me I can even carry out all the tasks that I did before, clearly, the only small difference is that it takes me a little longer, but that is such a small detail, so insignificant if you compare with how close I was to death, with what passed over, because after everything I always knew it, for revolutionaries impossibilities do not exist, and my splendid recovery is proof of that.